

**Preliminary Amendment of U.S. National Stage for International Application  
PCT/EP2003/013977 filed December 10, 2003**

Please add the following new heading on page 2, before line 7:

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION**

Please replace the heading on page 11, line 1, with the following amended heading:

**~~CLAIMS~~ What is claimed is:**

Please add new page 9, submitted herewith containing the Abstract of the Disclosure.

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**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-10 (cancelled).

Claim 11 (New): A process for the production of a light-colored fatty acid alkanolamide polyalkylene glycol ether by addition of an alkylene oxide onto a fatty acid alkanolamide in the presence of an alkaline catalyst, said process further comprising (a) carrying out the addition of alkylene oxide in the presence of a reducing agent and (b) treating the reaction product obtained in this way with steam under alkaline conditions.

Claim 12 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the fatty acid alkanolamide has the formula (I):



where  $\text{R}^1\text{CO}$  is a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated acyl group containing 6 to 22 carbon atoms and 0 or 1 to 3 double bonds,  $\text{R}^2$  is a hydroxyalkyl group containing 2 to 4 carbon atoms and  $\text{R}^3$  is hydrogen or has the same meaning as  $\text{R}^2$ .

Claim 13 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the fatty acid alkanolamide is selected from a condensation product of caproic acid, caprylic acid, capric acid, lauric acid, myristic acid, palmitic acid, stearic acid, isostearic acid, oleic acid, linoleic acid, linolenic acid, petroselic acid, elaeostearic acid, 12-hydroxystearic acid, ricinoleic acid, gadoleic acid, arachidonic acid, behenic acid, erucic acid, and technical mixtures thereof, with monoethanolamine, diethanolamine, monopropanolamine and dipropanolamine and

mixtures thereof.

Claim 14 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the fatty acid alkanolamide is selected from a condensation product of coconut oil fatty acid, palm kernel oil fatty acid, palm oil fatty acid and tallow fatty acid with monoethanolamine, diethanolamine, monopropylamine and dipropylamine and mixtures thereof.

Claim 15 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the fatty acid alkanolamide is selected from a condensation product of coconut oil or tallow fatty acid with monoethanolamine.

Claim 16 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the alkylene oxide is selected from a group consisting of ethylene oxide, propylene oxide, butylene oxide and mixtures thereof.

Claim 17 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the fatty acid alkanolamide and the alkylene oxide are used in a molar ratio of 1:1 to 1:25.

Claim 18 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the alkaline catalyst is used in an amount of 0.1 to 5% by weight, based on the starting materials.

Claim 19 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the reducing agent is selected from a group consisting of sodium borohydride, hypophosphorous acid and alkali metal salts thereof.

Claim 20 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the reducing agent is used in an amount of 0.1 to 2.5% by weight, based on the starting materials.

Claim 21 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the addition of alkylene oxide is carried out at temperatures of 80 to 150°C and a pressure of 1 to 10 bar.

Claim 22 (New): A process according to claim 11, wherein the treatment with steam is carried out at a pH value of 9 to 12.

Claim 23 (New): A process for the production of a light-colored fatty acid alkanolamide polyalkylene glycol ether by addition of an alkylene oxide onto a fatty acid alkanolamide in the presence of alkaline catalysts, wherein the fatty acid alkanolamide is selected from the condensation products of coconut oil fatty acid, palm kernel oil fatty acid, palm oil fatty acid and tallow fatty acid with monoethanolamine, diethanolamine, monopropanolamine and dipropanolamine and mixtures thereof, said process further comprising (a) carrying out the addition of alkylene oxides in the presence of reducing agents and (b) treating the reaction products obtained in this way with steam under alkaline condition.

Claim 24 (New): A process according to claim 23, wherein the fatty acid alkanolamide is selected from the condensation products of coconut oil or tallow fatty acids with monoethanolamine.

Claim 25 (New): A process according to claim 23, wherein the alkylene oxide is selected from a group consisting of ethylene oxide, propylene oxide, butylene oxide and mixtures thereof.

Claim 26 (New): A process according to claim 23, wherein the fatty acid alkanolamide and the alkylene oxide are used in a molar ratio of 1:1 to 1:25.

Claim 27 (New): A process according to claim 23, wherein the alkaline catalyst is used in an amount of 0.1 to 5% by weight, based on the starting materials.

Claim 28 (New): A process according to claim 23, wherein the reducing agent is selected from a group consisting of sodium borohydride, hypophosphorous acid or alkali metal salts

thereof.

Claim 29 (New): A process according to claim 23, wherein the reducing agent is used in amount of 0.1 to 2.5% by weight, based on the starting materials.

Claim 30 (New): A process according to claim 23, wherein the treatment with steam is carried out at a pH value of 9 to 12.